

The Second Chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*

**Handout for the Fall 2014 Term
for the Advanced Buddhist Philosophy Course in
English**

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The Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*

An explanation of [this chapter's] objects of realization – liberation, omniscience, and the paths leading to [the two, liberation and omniscience]

The general meaning

Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga

The way the meaning [of Dignaga's explanation] is elucidated by the author of the Pramanavarttika [Dignaga and Dharmakirti's] view

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Introduction

The following handout for the IBD Buddhist philosophy course on the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* contains translations of two texts:

1. The second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* (Tib.: *tshad ma rnam 'grel*, Engl.: *Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*)
2. The second chapter of Gyaltsab Je's commentary on the *Pramanavarttika*, called *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika* (Tib.: *tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byes pa rnam bshad thar lam gsal byed*) – usually referred to as *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (Tib.: *thar lam gsal byed*)

Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* is interspersed with the *Pramanavarttika*, for the commentary provides detailed expositions on the meaning of the verses of the root text.

Furthermore, since both texts are difficult to comprehend on their own, they are also interspersed with additional explanations by contemporary masters such as Geshe Yeshe Thabgyal, Geshe Palden Drakpa, Geshe Wangchen, Geshe Gyatso, Geshe Tsering Norbu, and others.

As the name of the text implies, Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* is a commentary on Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (Skt: *Pramana-samuccaya*, Tib.: *tshad ma kun btus*). The six chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium* are written in verse and constitute one of the most important works on *Pramana*. Here the Sanskrit term *Pramana* translates as “logic” or “epistemology”, although it literally means “valid cognizer”. This is explained in more detail below.

Dignaga

Dignaga (ca. 450-540 CE) was a proponent of the Chittamatra school Following Reasoning and one of Vasubandhu's four great disciples, each of whom surpassed their teacher in a particular field of Buddhist study. Dignaga was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Pramana*¹.

Dignaga was born into a Brahmin family in Simhavaktra, near Kanchi in South India. At a young age, he became very proficient in the sacred Brahmin scriptures and the worldly sciences. However, he eventually lost interest in the spiritual system of the Brahmins, developed renunciation for the suffering nature of cyclic existence, and took ordination from a Buddhist teacher called Nagadatta (Tib.: *glang po byin*) of the Vatsiputriya system, a sub-school of the Buddhist Vaibhashika School. Nagadatta named him Dignaga (Tib.: *phyogs kyi glang po*) and gave him extensive teachings on the three baskets according to the Vatsiputriya system.

Followers of the Vatsiputriya system assert a type of self that is inexpressible as something substantially or imputedly existent, or as being the same or different from the five aggregates. Dignaga was instructed by his teacher to meditate on the inexpressible self. In an attempt to find and comprehend the inexpressible self, Dignaga is said to have kindled fires in the four directions, stripped off his clothes, and meditated day and night. When he reported back to his teacher that he was unable to find such a self, his teacher took this as an indirect criticism and sent him to study elsewhere.

Dignaga went to stay at Nalanda Monastery where he became a disciple of Vasubandhu. He studied and mastered the entire body of sutras and treatises of the Hinayana and Mahayana, and became a great tantric practitioner, receiving instructions from Manjushri himself. He also developed great skills in debate and on numerous occasions defended the monastery against learned non-Buddhist scholars who challenged the monks in debate. Dignaga became particularly renowned for having defeated the great Brahmin scholar, Sudurjaya, who – as a result of losing the debate – converted to Buddhism together with his disciples.

¹ The other three disciples were (1) Shtiramati who was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Abhidharma*, (2) Gunaprabha who was more learned in the *Vinaya*, and (3) Arya Vimuktisena who was more learned in the *Prajnaparamita*.

At the time, it was customary for a scholar who lost a debate to adopt, along with his disciples, the spiritual system of the victor.

Dignaga eventually left Nalanda in order to lead a contemplative life in the forests of Orissa. There he resolved to compose what became his most famous work, the ***Compendium of Pramana***, as a compilation of his many previous writings on *Pramana*, which, according to his own description, were fragmentary works. It is said that he wrote the first verse of the ***Compendium***, comprising the homage and promise to compose the text, on a rock at his cave hermitage:

*To the one who has become a valid cognizer, to that which wishes to benefit migrators,
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

*In order to establish valid cognizers, I will herewith create a single compendium of my various
fragmentary writings.*

When he wrote those words many auspicious signs occurred, such as light blazing forth, the earth trembling, loud thunder rolling in the sky, and so forth. A Brahmin ascetic called Krishnamuni observed these signs and through his clairvoyance understood that they were the results of Dignaga's writing. Driven by envy, he went to Dignaga's cave while the latter was away on alms-rounds and erased the words. When Dignaga returned, he wrote the verse again, and again Krishnamuni came to erase it. The third time Dignaga left an additional note that read, “Please do not erase this verse just for fun because with this verse I am pursuing a great aim. Also, there is no point in erasing it out of envy since it is in my mind from where it cannot be removed. But if you disagree with these words, you should show yourself, and we will debate.” When the auspicious signs occurred a third time, Krishnamuni went again to Dignaga's cave. But upon reading the note he refrained from erasing the verse and waited for Dignaga's return. The two debated and Krishnamuni was defeated three times. When Dignaga asked him to adopt the Buddha Dharma as a result of his defeat, the Brahmin ascetic grew furious and emanated magical flames that burned Dignaga's clothes and possessions.

Distraught and discouraged by the Brahmin's reaction, Dignaga felt that if he could not help the highly intelligent Brahmin, how could he be of benefit to all sentient beings by composing the ***Compendium of Pramana***? He threw the chalk with which he had written the verse up in the air, thinking, “As soon as the chalk touches the ground, I will give up my aspiration to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and instead strive to become self-liberated”. But the chalk did not fall back to the ground and when he looked up, he saw Manjushri in the sky, holding the chalk. Manjushri asked Dignaga not to give up his mind of enlightenment, and promised to protect him until he attained the state of a Buddha. He also asked him to compose the ***Compendium*** and prophesied that in the future this commentary would become an eye for migrating beings.

Encouraged by these words, Dignaga composed the ***Compendium of Pramana***, which, along with Dharmakirti's ***Pramanavarttika***, has remained ever since the subject of study, contemplation, and meditation – at first widely in India, and then for centuries in Tibet, Mongolia, and the Himalayan regions.

After completing the text, Dignaga travelled around South India and greatly furthered the spread of Buddhism. One of his main disciples was Ishvarasena (Tib.: *dbang phyung sde*) who composed a commentary on the ***Compendium of Pramana*** and later became one of Dharmakirti's teachers.

Dharmakirti

Dharmakirti (ca. 600-660 CE) was also a follower of the Chittamatra School Following Reasoning. He was born to a Brahmin family in Tirumalai in the kingdom of Chudamani of Tamil Nadu. Until the age of eighteen he trained in the Brahminical tradition and became very well-versed in non-Buddhist philosophy. Then, upon reading a Buddhist text, he developed faith in the Buddha Dharma and started to dress in the style of a Buddhist layperson. This angered the Brahmins and he was expelled from his community.

Dharmakirti went to Nalanda monastery where he received ordination and extensive teachings from Dharmapala (Tib.: *chos skyong*). Then he requested Ishvarasena – who was a direct disciple of Dignaga – to teach him the ***Compendium of Pramana***. Ishvarasena taught him the text three times. After the first time, Dharmakirti's understanding of the ***Compendium*** had become equal to that of Ishvarasena; after the second time, it had become equal to Dignaga's; and after the third time Dharmakirti was able to

recognize that some of Ishvarasena's assertions were not in accordance with Dignaga's views. After Dharmakirti revealed those mistaken assertions to Ishvarasena, the latter was delighted by his student's intelligence and granted him permission to compose a commentary on the *Compendium of Pramana* in order to refute those assertions.

Dharmakirti was also initiated into the Buddhist tantras, became a highly accomplished practitioner, and had a direct vision of Heruka.

In order to deepen his understanding of non-Buddhist philosophy, Dharmakirti then went to work as the servant of a renowned non-Buddhist scholar, pretending not to be a Buddhist. He served him and his family for several years, learning all the secret points of that philosophical system. Later he challenged and defeated the renowned scholar in debate, converting him and his disciples to Buddhism.

Thereafter, Dharmakirti travelled across India converting many people to Buddhism. Eventually he arrived at the gates of the residence of king Utpullapusa, who had heard of Dharmakirti's great fame and invited him to stay in his kingdom. Dharmakirti accepted and while staying there composed the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (Tib.: *tshad ma sde bdun*) – one of which is the *Pramanavarttika* – as well as an auto-commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. However, most contemporary scholars were unable to grasp the meaning of the treatises. The few who understood the meaning, moved by envy, claimed that they were incorrect and tied them with a string to the tail of a dog. Dharmakirti's response was that the dog would run through the different villages and cities, and in that manner spread the treatises. He also added a verse to the beginning of the *Pramanavarttika* (after the verse of homage and the promise to compose the text) that reads:

*Most living beings are attached to the mundane and not endowed with the
dexterity of wisdom.
Not only are they not interested in excellent teachings, they are hateful owing to
the defilement of envy.
This is why the thought that this [treatise] will be beneficial to others does not
occur.
But having familiarized [my] mind with excellent teachings, I am happy [to compose the
treatise] for the sake of generating great striving.*

Sometime later Dharmakirti taught the *Pramanavarttika* to two of his main disciples, Devendrabodhi (Tib.: *lha dbang blo*) and Shakyabodhi (Tib.: *sha'kya blo*). Afterwards, he asked Devendrabodhi to compose a commentary on the text. However, displeased with the first draft Dharmakirti washed it away with water; displeased with the second draft he burned it. He finally accepted the third draft but criticized it, remarking that although the explicit meaning of the text was conveyed, the deeper implicit meaning was not. Thinking that no one would be able to properly comprehend his text, Dharmakirti added the following line to the end of the *Pramanavarttika*:

*Just as a river into the ocean, [the meaning of this treatise] will dissolve into my
body and disappear.*

Towards the end of his life Dharmakirti founded a school and a temple at Kalinga, where he passed away.

Both Dignaga and Dharmakirti strongly affected the course not only of Buddhist philosophy, but of Indian philosophy in general. Their expositions on language, negation, direct perception, etc. were highly influential among both Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers, but their greatest impact derived from their analysis of inferential reasoning.

Dignaga and Dharmakirti are often described as Buddhist logicians, for they formulated a system of logic and epistemology that was based on a new form of deductive reasoning. Yet this does not mean that they were chiefly interested in the formal properties of reasoning. Instead, they regarded logic as a useful tool that enables Buddhist practitioners to eliminate their misperceptions, replace them with correct apprehensions of reality and eventually attain liberation and Buddhahood.

The debate format that is still very popular among Tibetan Buddhist students of debate is based largely on Dignaga and Dharmakirti's works. Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*, in particular, provides Tibetan Buddhist

philosophers with a standard vocabulary that is used as a framework for analysis of the various Buddhist scriptures. It also represents the epistemological foundation of the curriculum in many Tibetan monastic institutions.

Gyaltsab Je

Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen (1364–1432) was born in Tsang province of central Tibet. He was ordained as a monk at the age of ten and given the name Darma Rinchen (Tib.: *dar ma rin chen*). Gyaltsab Je studied at the Sakya Monastery, the Kadam monastery of Sangpu (Tib.: *gsang phu*), and the Kagyu monastery Tsetang (*rtse thang* – which later converted to the Geluk tradition). Like Lama Tsongkhapa, he was also a student of the renowned Sakya Master Rendawa Zhoenu Lodroe (Tib.: *red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros*).

After extensive study of the *Prajnaparamita*, *Pramana*, *Vinaya*, and so forth Gyaltsab Je became an accomplished and eloquent scholar of the Sakya tradition, famed for his intellect and knowledge. While visiting different monasteries in Central Tibet, he met Lama Tsongkhapa. He had heard of Lama Tsongkhapa's fame and went to attend one of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings at Ratrong Monastery. As Gyaltsab Je listened to Lama Tsongkhapa, he was astounded by the clarity and profundity of his teaching, and generated great faith. From that time on, Gyaltsab Je was completely devoted to Lama Tsongkhapa and became one of his main disciples. He received extensive teachings from Lama Tsongkhapa and took copious notes. Being a prolific writer he composed numerous commentaries (such as the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*). He also supervised the construction of Ganden Monastery.

Before Lama Tsongkhapa passed away, he appointed Gyaltsab Je as the first 'throne holder' of the Ganden (or Gelug) tradition.

The Seven Treatises on Pramana

As mentioned above, Dharmakirti composed seven commentaries on the *Compendium of Pramana*, referred to as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (Tib.: *tshad ma sde bdun*). These seven texts can be categorized into:

- i. Three treatises that are like a body and
- ii. Four treatises that are like branches.

The three treatises that are like a body are:

- a) *Pramanavarttika* (Tib.: *tshad ma rnam 'grel*, Engl.: *Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*)
- b) *Pramanaviniscaya* (Tib.: *tshad ma rnam nges*, Engl.: *Ascertainment of Pramana*)
- c) *Nyayabindu* (Tib.: *rigs thigs*, Engl.: *Drops of Reasoning*)

The four treatises that are like branches are:

- a) *Hetubindu* (Tib.: *gtan tshigs thig pa*, Engl.: *Drops of Logic*)
- b) *Sambandhapariksha* (Tib.: *'brel ba brtag pa*, Engl.: *Investigating Relations*)
- c) *Samtanantarasiddhi* (Tib.: *rgyud gzhan grub pa*, Engl.: *Proof of Other [Mental] Continua*)
- d) *Vadanyaya* (Tib.: *rtsod pa'i rigs pa*, Engl.: *Reasoning of Debate*)

The three *treatises that are like a body* are general elaborations on the *Compendium of Pramana* on logic and epistemology. The first is the most extensive, the second is slightly shorter, and the third is the shortest. These three are *treatises that are like a body* because they each teach the eight 'pivotal points of logic' (Tib.: *rtog ge'i tshig don rgyad*).

The eight 'pivotal points of logic' are:

1. Correct inferential cognizers (Tib.: *rjes dpag yang dag*)
2. False inferential cognizers (Tib.: *rjes dpag ltar snang*)
3. Correct direct perceivers (Tib.: *mngon sum yang dag*)
4. False direct perceivers (Tib.: *mngon sum ltar snang*)
5. Correct proof statements (Tib.: *sgrub ngag yang dag*)

6. False proof statements (Tib.: *sgrub ngag ltar snang*)
7. Correct refutations (Tib.: *sun 'byin yang dag*)
8. False refutations (Tib.: *sun 'byin ltar snang*)

Each of the three texts teaches the eight 'pivotal points of logic' by *primarily* teaching the four correct pivotal points, while teaching the four false pivotal points in an *ancillary* fashion.

The last four texts are *treatises that are like branches* because they do not teach all eight 'pivotal points of logic' but only some of them, and because they are just supplements to the first, third, or fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The *Hetubindu* (on correct reasons) and *Sambandhapariksha* (on the relationship between correct reasons and predicates) are supplements to the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, while the *Samtanantarāsiddhi* (on the issue of other minds) is a supplement to the third and the *Vadanyaya* (on debate techniques etc.) is a supplement to the fourth chapter.

The eight pivotal points of logic

Among the four 'correct pivotal points of logic', (1) correct inferential cognizers and (3) correct direct perceivers are considered to be the tools that facilitate our own understanding; they function mainly for our own benefit, for they enable us to accomplish our personal short- and long-term goals by replacing harmful misperceptions with well-founded recognition of reality.

(1) *Correct* inferential cognizers and inferential cognizers are equivalent. Inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects in dependence on correct reasons. These types of consciousness are essential for Buddhist practice because they facilitate the realization of essential concepts, such as the suffering nature of cyclic existence, impermanence, selflessness, etc. which need to be apprehended in order to gradually eliminate the numerous misperceptions that are responsible for our problems and difficulties. However, most of these essential concepts are slightly hidden phenomena and cannot be perceived initially without relying on logical reasoning. Logical reasoning, in turn, relies on logically correct syllogisms. An example of such a syllogism is:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. Like the last moment of a candle flame, for instance.

A correct syllogism has four parts: a (i) subject, (ii) predicate, (iii) correct reason, and (iv) example. In the case of the syllogism cited above, "physical body" is the subject, "impermanent" the predicate, "being a product of its own causes and conditions" the correct reason, and "the last moment of the candle flame" the example. Furthermore, the composite of the two, the subject (physical body) and the predicate (impermanent), constitutes the *object that is to be established* (Tib.: *bsgrub bya*). Hence, "the physical body is impermanent" is the above syllogism's *object that is to be established*.

After having realized the different aspects of the syllogism – e.g. that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*, that *whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent*, and so forth, a practitioner eventually generates an inferential cognizer realizing the *object that is to be established*, i.e. realizing that the physical body is impermanent. Since such realization arises in dependence on a correct reason (being a product of its own causes and conditions) inferential cognizers are described as conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects (e.g. that the physical body is impermanent) in dependence on correct reasons.

(3) *Correct* direct perceivers and direct perceivers are also equivalent. Direct perceivers refer to correct sense or mental consciousnesses that perceive their main object directly without relying on a generic image. Examples of direct perceivers are sense direct perceivers, such as an eye consciousness apprehending a table, an ear consciousness apprehending a song, a nose consciousness apprehending the smell of perfume, and so forth. These sense consciousnesses realize phenomena that are obvious or manifest (i.e. not hidden), such as shapes, colors, sounds, etc. Other examples of direct perceiver are self-knowers (which are explained below), clairvoyant awarenesses, and yogic direct perceivers. Yogic direct perceivers are mental direct perceivers that directly realize their main objects (e.g. impermanence, selflessness etc.) in dependence on prolonged and extensive meditation.

Direct perceivers are essential to Buddhist practice. Although hidden phenomena are realized for the first time by inferential cognizers, such a realization is not sufficient for practitioners aspiring to transform their mind and attain liberation or Buddhahood. Such a realization is not sufficient because inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that do not realize their objects directly but through a generic image.

For instance, an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness does not realize selflessness directly but through the generic image of selflessness. Hence, a practitioner who has cultivated an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness continues to familiarize with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness until, after prolonged and intense meditation, that consciousness transforms into a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, which is strong enough to serve as an effective antidote to the misperception of the self and to other afflictions.

Ordinary direct perceivers, such as sense direct perceivers, are also significant in Buddhist practice, for they enable practitioners to listen to teachings, read the scriptures, etc. They also facilitate inferential cognition of a hidden phenomenon. For instance, a practitioner who generated the inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent in dependence on the above syllogism (*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is the product of its own causes and conditions*) must have realized, prior to generating such an inferential cognizer, that *the physical body is the product of its own causes and conditions*. But unlike the *physical body being impermanent*, the *physical body being a product of its own causes and conditions* is not a hidden phenomenon, for it can be realized for the first time by an eye consciousness.

(5) Correct proof statements and (7) correct refutations are considered to be the tools that facilitate others' understanding, which is why they are mainly for the benefit of others. After having attained realizations ourselves by means of inferential cognizers and direct perceivers, we need to assist others in attaining the same realizations by refuting their wrong views with correct refutations, and by generating realizations in their mental continuums through proof statements.

(5) Correct proof statements are verbal statements that express a correct syllogism. An example of a proof statement is, "Whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent. Like the last moment of a candle flame, for instance. Likewise, the physical body is also a product of its own causes and conditions." Here these words state that just as the last moment of a candle flame is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions, likewise the physical body is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions.

Therefore, the words of the proof statement express the following syllogism:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. Like the last moment of a candle flame, for instance.

In dependence on hearing that proof statement, a person who has not yet realized that the physical body is impermanent is able to cultivate an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent.

(7) Correct refutations refer to correct consequences. Like a syllogism, a consequence is a form of logical statement which one cites to help another person first to recognize and then to let go of a wrong view. A consequence is stated in such a way as to reveal the absurdity of that person's wrong view; it turns his own assertions against him, so that he is unable to give a correct response without contradicting what he asserted.

For instance, to a person who holds that (a) the physical body is permanent, that (b) the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions, and that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent, the following consequence is cited:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and condition because it is permanent.

In this case, the person accepts that *the physical body is permanent*, which is why he cannot claim that the **reason is not established** (i.e. he cannot claim that it is not correct that the physical body is permanent) Since he accepts the forward and counter-pervasions (i.e. that whatever is *permanent* is necessarily not a product of its own causes and conditions, and whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily not permanent) he cannot claim that there is **no pervasion**. Lastly he cannot even accept that the

physical body is not a product of its own causes and conditions, for that would contradict his assertion that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*. He is thus left speechless.

The person comes to realize that his views are contradictory, which enables him to reassess his beliefs until he either thinks that the physical body is probably impermanent or is convinced that it is. At that point one cites a proof statement expressing a syllogism that establishes that the physical body is impermanent. As mentioned above, in dependence on that syllogism the person is able to eventually generate an inferential cognizer *realizing* that the physical body is impermanent.

Regarding the four 'false pivotal points of logic', (2) false inferential cognizers refer to conceptual consciousnesses that are not actual inferential cognizers because they do not realize their objects. An example of a false inferential cognizer is a correctly assuming consciousness perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which did not arise in dependence on a syllogism. Another example is a correctly assuming consciousness perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which arose in dependence on a wrong syllogism. A wrong syllogism is a logically incorrect syllogism and therefore does not lead to an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established*. For instance, the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it exists*, is a wrong syllogism since there is 'no pervasion'. There is 'no pervasion' because whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent. Whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent because there are phenomena that are permanent.

Another example of a wrong syllogism is: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable*. This is a wrong syllogism because the reason is not an attribute of the subject, i.e. the physical body is not unchangeable. Such a wrong syllogism may give rise to a wrong conceptual consciousness perceiving the physical body to be permanent, which is also a false inferential cognizer.

(4) False direct perceivers refer to conceptual consciousnesses or wrong non-conceptual awarenesses. Since false direct perceivers are either conceptual or wrong consciousnesses they are not actual direct perceivers. Examples include a conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness, an eye consciousness perceiving a blue snow mountain, and a memory consciousness remembering a table.

(6) False proof statements are statements that express a wrong syllogism. This means that wrong proof statements express a logically incorrect syllogism in dependence on which one cannot generate an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established*. An example of a false proof statement is: "Whatever is unchangeable is necessarily permanent. Like the absence of an elephant on the table, for instance. The physical body is also unchangeable." This statement is a false proof statement because it expresses the following wrong syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable. Like the absence of an elephant on the table, for instance*.

(8) Wrong consequences are consequences that do not reveal the absurdities of a person's wrong view, so that the person is unable to become aware of his contradictory assertions. An example of a wrong consequence is:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and conditions because it is permanent.

addressed to a person who holds that (a) the physical body is permanent, that (b) the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions, but who does not hold that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent.

It is important to identify and understand these false 'pivotal points of logic', for practitioners may confuse them with their correct counterparts.

The *Pramanavarttika*

Among the *Seven Treatises of Pramana*, the most popular one is the *Pramanavarttika*, which in Tibet, Mongolia, and the Himalaya region in particular, has been more widely studied than Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*.

The *Pramanavarttika* is written in verse and has four chapters:

1. The chapter on inference for one's own benefit (Skt.: *Svarthanumana*, Tib.: *rang don rjes dpag gi le'u*)
2. The chapter on the accomplishment of a valid cognition (Skt.: *Pramanasiddhi*, Tib.: *tshad ma grub pa'i le'u*)
3. The chapter on direct perception (Skt.: *Pratyaksha*, Tib.: *mngon sum le'u*)
4. The chapter on inference for others' benefit (Skt.: *Prarthanumana*, Tib.: *gzhan don rjes dpag gi le'u*)

The chapter on inference for one's own benefit

Unlike the last three chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*, the first does not actually elaborate on any of the verses or chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, but serves as an introductory chapter to the text. It sets forth inferential cognizers (both the correct and false inferential cognizers, among the eight 'pivotal points of logic') because, as Dharmakirti explains in his auto-commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*:

Thorough discernment of that which is factual and that which is not depends on inferential cognizers.

Therefore, study and contemplation of the first chapter aids practitioners in cultivating inferential cognizers in their mental continuum, which in turn facilitates their comprehension of the last three chapters.

However, instead of explaining the inferential cognizers themselves, the first chapter expounds on that which mainly gives rise to inferential cognizers, i.e. correct syllogisms, and presents their general structure, categories, definitions, and so forth.

The chapter on the accomplishment of valid cognition

The second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is the most important one. It comments only on the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, which constitute the homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. Elaborating on the two lines of homage, the second chapter presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that lead to these two states. Dharmakirti presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that lead there by way of establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer'. However, this does not mean that the Buddha is literally a valid cognizer, because valid cognizers are consciousnesses while the Buddha is not a consciousness but a person. Instead, it means that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'. The Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

As part of establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being', the second chapter also sets forth past and future lives, the four noble truths, and so forth.

Some scholars explain that the reason why Dharmakirti composed the second chapter is that at the time, numerous critics expressed their disapproval of Dignaga's works on Pramana. As mentioned above, Pramana literally means 'valid cognizer'. Valid cognizers are awarenesses that are newly non-deceptive, i.e. that newly realize their main objects. There are two types of valid cognizers: (a) direct valid cognizers (i.e. valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (i.e. valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

One of the main objectives of the Pramana literature is to teach practitioners the means of cultivating correct apprehension of the essential concepts of the Buddha Dharma. Such apprehension depends primarily on realizing phenomena that are currently hidden to us and which we can realize initially only with inferential cognizers. Inferential cognizers in turn depend on correct syllogisms and thus on logical reasoning. Since the Pramana literature elucidates such logical reasoning and the way to utilize it as a tool to comprehend impermanence, selflessness, and so forth, commentaries on Pramana are usually referred to as commentaries on "logic" or "epistemology", and the study of Pramana is referred to as the study of "logic" or "epistemology".

However, many Indian scholars were unable to recognize the value of Dignaga's work. Some claimed that teachings on Pramana (i.e. logic or epistemology) were not based on the teachings of the Buddha. Others

alleged that the main purpose of the Pramana literature was to defeat an opponent in debate and that it was of no use to those aspiring to attain liberation or Buddhahood.

Therefore, Dharmakirti taught the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* to counteract these assertions by demonstrating the significance of the Pramana literature with respect to studying, contemplating, and meditating on past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Please note that even though in general, the *Pramanavarttika* is based on the point of view of the Chittamatra School Following Reasoning, the second chapter is from the perspective of the Sautrantika School.

The chapter on direct perception and the chapter on inference for others' benefit

The last two chapters of the *Pramanavarttika* comment on the actual body of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, i.e. the six chapters of the text. Among the eight 'pivotal points of logic', the third chapter presents correct and false direct perceivers, and the fourth chapter, correct and false proof statements as well as correct and false refutations.

Elucidation of the Path to Liberation

Dharmakirti's verses are very terse and their meaning often difficult to access. Therefore, students of the *Pramanavarttika* mostly rely on one or more of its commentaries.

One of these commentaries is Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (which is written in prose). It is one of the foremost Tibetan commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika* still studied, debated, and meditated on in most Gelugpa monastic institutions; it is thus part of a living and vibrant philosophical tradition. Contemporary masters regularly refer to it (and Dharmakirti's root text) when explaining past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Gyaltsab Je composed the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* based on the Indian commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika*. However, unlike most Indian commentators, Gyaltsab Je provides extremely detailed outlines, as is customary in many Tibetan treatises. The *Elucidation* structures Dharmakirti's root text by way of dividing it into numerous textual sections, with each section having a different heading. The advantage of such a systematic format is that the text becomes more accessible and easier to comprehend.

Furthermore, not only does Gyaltsab Je offer comprehensive explanations of the meaning of Dharmakirti's verses, he also provides lengthy discussions, thought-provoking analysis, and invaluable summaries.

In the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, he begins the presentation of the second chapter by bowing down to the revered Gurus. Thereafter, he cites the "second heading", which is the main heading of the second chapter. This heading is referred to as the "second heading", for it is the second of three headings cited at the beginning of the *Elucidation*. These three are really the subheadings of an earlier heading, which together with yet another heading constitute the basic headings of the four chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*. The two basic headings are:

- (1) The means for oneself to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there
- (2) Having ascertained these, the means of assisting others [to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there]

Of these two, the second is the main heading of the fourth chapter, while the first (as mentioned above) is the one that has three sub-headings:

- (1.1) The means of ascertaining hidden phenomena
- (1.2) An explanation of the objects of ascertainment – liberation, omniscience, and the paths that lead there
- (1.3) The means of ascertaining obvious/manifest phenomena

Among the three subheadings, the first is the main heading of the first chapter, the second is the main heading of the second chapter, and the third is the main heading of the third chapter.

After citing the main heading of the second chapter, Gyaltsab Je gives a short introduction to the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, in which he briefly explains the meaning of the two lines of homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the reason for establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'. Thereafter he starts his elucidation of the verses in Dharmakirti's second chapter.

Questions for studying the *Introduction*

- Who composed the *Compendium of Pramana* and how many chapters does it have?
- Who composed the *Pramanavarttika* and how many chapters does it have?
- Who composed the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation*?
- Which of these three commentaries are written in verse and which are written in prose?
- On which text does the *Pramanavarttika* primarily comment?
- On which text does the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* primarily comment?
- Which philosophical tenet school does Dignaga follow?
- Which philosophical tenet school does Dharmakirti follow?
- Which philosophical tenet school does Gyaltsab Je follow?
- Among the *Seven Treatises of the Pramana*, which are the three treatises that are like a body, and which four treatises are like branches?
- Which of the three *treatises that are like a body* is the longest and which one is the shortest?
- How are Dignaga and Dharmakirti significant from the point of view of logic or epistemology?
- Why are the first three treatises *like a body*, and the last four *like branches*?
- What are the eight 'pivotal points of logic'? Think of an example for each of the eight.
- Which of the eight 'pivotal points of logic' are mainly for one's own benefit, and which are mainly for the benefit of others?
- Why are the four correct 'pivotal points of logic' important for Buddhist practice?
- Why are the four false 'pivotal points of logic' explained?
- What does an inferential cognizer depend upon in order to realize its main object?
- What is main subject matter of the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
- What is main subject matter of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
- What is main subject matter of the third chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
- What is main subject matter of the fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
- Why did Dharmakirti compose the second chapter?
- Why is the topic of logic or epistemology called "Pramana", i.e. "valid cognizer"?
- How is the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* different from most Indian commentaries?

Technical Note

The significance of fonts and formatting used in this translation of the Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* by Gyaltsab Je

TEXT SOURCE	LOCATION ON PAGES OF HANDOUT	FONT
Gyaltsab Je's commentary	at the left margin	Bookman Old Style 11pt.
Gyaltsab Je's headings of the OUTLINES of the <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	at the left margin	Bookman Old Style 13pt.
Indian or Tibetan sources, e.g., Dharmakirti's <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	Indented	<i>Bookman Old Style 11pt. italics</i>
*Explanatory comments by contemporary masters	Indented	Cambria 11pt.

*Ven. Kelsang Wangmo has translated explanations or clarifications of difficult points by contemporary masters and inserted syntheses of those into Gyaltsab Je's text.

The Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika*

I bow down to the revered gurus

The second [heading] is:

An explanation of [this chapter's] objects of realization – liberation, omniscience, and the paths that lead there

As mentioned above, the main heading of the second chapter is: **an explanation of the objects of realization- liberation, omniscience, and the paths that lead there.**

Therefore, the main topics of the second chapter are liberation, omniscience, and the different paths leading to either of these states.

[The main heading of the second chapter is divided in two:]

- (1) The general meaning
- (2) The meaning of the branches

In the '**general meaning**' Gyaltsab je provides an introductory explanation while in the '**meaning of the branches**' he starts the actual explanation of the verses of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*.

The general meaning

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga
- (2) The way the meaning [of Dignaga's explanation] is elucidated by the author of the *Pramanavarttika*
- (3) [Dignaga and Dharmakirti's] view

Under the first heading – '**citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga**' – Gyaltsab je cites the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (the homage) and two lines that are the promise to compose the text. Thereafter, Gyaltsab je briefly explains the meaning of the four lines.

The reason for citing the homage at the beginning of the second chapter is that, as mentioned before, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* chiefly comments on Dignaga's first two lines of homage.

Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga

[The homage and the promise to compose the text read:]

*To the one who has become a valid cognizer, the one wishing to benefit migrators,
To "the teacher", "the sugata", "the protector" I bow down.*

*Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians,
I will properly explain [the chapter on] the accomplishment of valid cognition.*

The first two lines are from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. With those words Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. However, the latter two lines are not from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. Instead, they are a promise to compose the text taken from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of the Pramanavarttika* (Skt.: *Pramanavarttikalamkara*,

Tib.: *tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rgyan*), which is a commentary on the *Compendium of Pramana*.

The promise to compose the text from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* reads:

*In order to establish valid cognizers I will herewith compose one [text] as a compendium
Of all my [other] texts that provided various scattered explanations.*

Some scholars explain that Gyaltsab je intentionally cited Prajnakaragupta's promise to compose the text instead of Dignaga's in order to indicate that the explanations Prajnakaragupta provides in his commentary accord with those given by Dignaga in the *Compendium of Pramana*.

In brief, the meaning of this [verse] is as follows: The first half presents the homage and the second half the promise to compose [the text]. The homage praises the Teacher [Buddha Shakyamuni] for both his excellent causes and his excellent results. The excellent causes are twofold: (a) excellent intention and (b) excellent application. [Excellent] intention refers to great compassion that wishes to completely benefit beings. [Excellent] application refers to “the teacher”: [an awareness] familiarizing itself, for the sake of others, with the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Gyaltsab je explains that Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni by way of praising the Buddha's excellent causes and results. The excellent causes he cites are intention and application. In general, excellent intention refers to the proper motivation for becoming a Buddha; the motivation that focuses on the benefit of sentient beings, while excellent application refers to engaging in the actual practices impelled by that motivation.

Here, excellent intention is more specifically explained to refer mainly to great compassion. Great compassion is a mental factor that is defined as a loving attitude wishing for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Yet, as explained below, excellent intention also refers to Bodhicitta, great love, and so forth.

Excellent application, which is called “teacher”, here refers mainly to the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a practitioner who aspires to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. The Buddha who teaches selflessness perfectly is the actual teacher. But since the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Mahayana practitioner is a cause for becoming a Buddha, the name of the result (teacher) is given to the cause (the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Bodhisattva).

The reason for giving the name of the result to the cause is that the Buddha attained full enlightenment in dependence on previously having meditated on selflessness (while a Bodhisattva). Also, the main teaching given by the Buddha in order to lead all sentient beings to liberation and Buddhahood is the teaching on selflessness.

Therefore, Lama Tsongkhapa says in his *Praise to Dependent Arising*:

*Since this teaching is not seen in [the works of] others
The title of Teacher is yours alone.*

The Buddha is like a skilled physician who identifies the real underlying cause of a disease and is able to prescribe a treatment that eradicates that cause.

However, excellent application – “the teacher” – also refers to the wisdom realizing impermanence, the wisdom realizing the four noble truths, the practice of the six perfections, and so on.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate excellent intention and excellent application are:

*...to the one wishing to benefit migrators;
To “the teacher”...*

[Excellent] results are also [twofold]: the excellent own benefit [kaya] and the excellent others' benefit [kaya]. The excellent own benefit [kaya] refers to [the Buddha] being endowed with the three special qualities of “the sugata”, the nature of which is eliminations and realizations. [The excellent] others' benefit [kaya] refers to [the Rupakaya] which has the quality of protecting migrators by way of teaching others the path [the Buddha] himself has realized.

Having engaged in prolonged and extensive meditation on the excellent intention and the excellent application, practitioners eventually attain the two excellent results of a Buddha: the excellent own benefit kaya and the excellent others' benefit kaya.

The *excellent own benefit kaya* refers to “the sugata” (Tib: *bde bar gshegs pa*, Eng: the one gone to bliss / the one arrived at bliss). However, “the sugata” here does not refer to Buddha Shakyamuni himself but to his cessations and realizations. Therefore, “the sugata” is categorized into (1) sugata-eliminations and (2) sugata-realizations. These two are the Buddha's excellent own benefit kaya, for they are the Buddha's qualities that mainly benefit the Buddha himself.

The Buddha's eliminations and realizations are both called “sugata-” (i.e. “the one gone to bliss/the one arrived at bliss”) because, owing to the Buddha's irrevocable cessation of all obstructions and the fact that his enlightened mind is able to directly and simultaneously realize *all* phenomena, the Buddha is free from any kind of non-blissful state, i.e. he is free from any type of imperfection.

As mentioned above in the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, the two categories of “the sugata” each have three special qualities. The three qualities of sugata-eliminations are:

1. Properly eliminated
2. Eliminated without return
3. Completely eliminated

The first quality distinguishes the Buddha's elimination of obstructions from the elimination of coarse afflictions in the continuum of non-Buddhist practitioners. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions properly because his cessations are irrevocable, while the cessations of non-Buddhists are merely temporary.

The second quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations of Aryas on the path of learning such as Arya Hearers and Solitary Realizers who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions without return because unlike these practitioners he no longer returns, i.e. takes birth in Samsara under the control of afflictions and contaminated karma.

The third quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations in the continuum of Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe-destroyers, for the Buddha has completely eliminated obstructions to liberation and omniscience, while Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe-destroyers have only eliminated obstructions to liberation.

Non-Buddhists possess none of the three qualities; Hearer and Solitary Realizer Aryas who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing possess the first quality but not the latter two; and Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe-destroyers possess the first two qualities but not the last one.

The three qualities of sugata-realizations are:

1. Realizing suchness
2. Being stable realizations
3. Realizing completely

The Buddha realizes suchness because he directly realizes the mode of subsistence of the four noble truths. His realizations are stable because his teachings do not contradict valid cognition in the least. Also, the Buddha realizes phenomena completely because he directly

realizes the methods that lead to liberation and omniscience together with the results of those methods.

As before, the first quality distinguishes the Buddha's realizations from the realizations of non-Buddhists, the second quality distinguishes them from the realizations of Aryas on the path of learning, and the third from Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe-destroyers.

The *excellent others' benefit kaya* refers to the Buddha's Rupakaya, i.e. his Nirmanakaya and Samboghakaya. These two kayas mainly benefit sentient beings by teaching them what to adopt and what to discard, i.e. by teaching them the methods to attaining liberation and omniscience.

The excellent others' benefit kaya (and thus the Rupakaya) is referred to as "protector" for it protects sentient beings from the obstructions to liberation and omniscience.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate the excellent own benefit kaya and the excellent others' benefit kaya are:

...*"the sugata", "the protector"...*

Therefore, the Buddha, the Bhagavan, who from excellent causes has arisen as valid cognizer endowed with the entity of the excellent results of the twofold benefits, is known as "genuine valid cognizer".

The words "who from excellent causes has arisen as valid cognizer" indicate that the Buddha was at some point an ordinary sentient being, who in dependence on excellent causes gradually attained full enlightenment. This distinguishes the Buddha from a creator god since a creator god is asserted to have always been divine without, at some point, having newly attained such a godly state through listening, contemplating, and meditating.

Also, the Buddha is omniscient but not omnipotent; he is unable to bestow happiness and suffering on sentient beings. Instead, he teaches them the methods to attain liberation and omniscience in accordance with their predispositions, aspirations, interests, and so forth.

The Buddha having arisen as valid cognizer and being known as genuine valid cognizer does not literally mean that the Buddha *is* a valid cognizer, for a valid cognizer is necessarily a consciousness, whereas the Buddha is a person and thus not a consciousness.

However, the Buddha is called "valid cognizer" because he is a 'valid cognizer being' (Tib: *tshad ma'i skye bu*). He is a 'valid cognizer being' because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

A valid cognizer is defined as 'a knower which is newly non-deceptive'. This means that a valid cognizer is an awareness that newly realizes its main object. In other words, it realizes its main object *without* depending on a previous moment of consciousness that realized the same object. An example of a valid cognizer is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table or the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness. Valid cognizers are explained in detail below.

There is a purpose for [calling the second chapter] "the accomplishment of valid cognition". [The purpose is] to attend to migrators who are mistaken with regard to mode of existence [of phenomena] because they apply an incorrect definition of a valid cognizer etc. [provided by] faulty logicians.

This paragraph explains the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text:

Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians

I will properly explain [the chapter on] the accomplishment of valid cognition

The purpose for calling the second chapter "the chapter on the accomplishment of valid cognition" is to attend to (or address) those who are mistaken with regard to the mode of existence of phenomena because they do not understand the definition of a valid cognizer. They do not understand the definition because they rely on faulty logicians who are unable to define a valid cognizer correctly.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab je explains the meaning of the two lines of homage from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of Pramana*.

Questions:

- What are the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
- Which words of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* does Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* mainly comment on?
- Who does Dignaga pay homage to in his *Compendium of Pramana*?
- What are the two excellent causes?
- Why are these two *excellent* causes?
- Why is selflessness called "teacher"?
- What are the two excellent results?
- What are the two categories of "the sugata"?
- Why is the first excellent result an 'own benefit kaya'?
- Why is the second excellent result an 'others' benefit kaya'?
- Why are the Buddha's cessation and realizations referred to as "sugata"/the one gone to bliss /the one arrived at bliss?
- What are the three qualities of sugata-eliminations?
- What are the three qualities of sugata-realizations?
- How many of the three qualities of sugata-eliminations does a Hinayana foe-destroyer possess?
- How many of the three qualities of sugata-realizations does a non-Buddhist possess?
- Why is the second excellent result referred to as "protector"?
- Is the Buddha a valid cognizer?
- Why is Buddha Shakyamuni described as "the one who accomplished valid cognizers"?
- What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
- What is the meaning of a 'valid cognizer being'?
- Is a 'valid cognizer being' necessarily a Buddha?

The way the meaning [of Dignaga's explanation] is elucidated by the author of the *Pramanavarttika*

Under this heading, Gyaltsab je describes how Dharmakirti elucidates in his *Pramanavarttika* the meaning of Dignaga's two lines of homage.

[The meaning of] the first half of the [first] verse [of the *Compendium of Pramana*] is taught by way of drawing out five factors: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) "the teacher", (d) "the sugata", and (e) "the protector". Furthermore, the first ['the one who has become a valid cognizer'] is the basis of the [four] special qualities that is to be established; the remaining [four] are the special qualities which establish [the one who has become a valid cognizer].

As cited above, the first half of the first verse in Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* is:

*To the one who has become a valid cognizer, the one wishing to benefit
migrators,
To "the teacher", "the sugata", "the protector", I bow down.*

The five factors are:

- a. The one who has become a valid cognizer: a 'valid cognizer being'
- b. The one wishing to benefit migrators: great compassion, etc.
- c. "the teacher": the wisdom realizing selflessness, etc.
- d. "the sugata": (i) sugata-eliminations and (ii) sugata-realizations
- e. "the protector": the Rupakaya which protects sentient beings by teaching them what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded with regard to the four noble truths

As mentioned above, the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* are liberation, omniscience, and the paths that lead to these states. Dharmakirti presents these topics by way of expounding on the five factors.

Of the five, the last four (the one wishing to benefit migrators, "the teacher", "the sugata", and "the protector") establish or prove the first factor, namely that the Buddha has become a valid cognizer, i.e. that he is a 'valid cognizer being'. Therefore, Gyaltsab je says that the one who has become a valid cognizer is the basis of the four special qualities, i.e. the basis of the last four factors. That basis is the object which is to be established or proved. The four latter factors are the special qualities which establish or prove that the Buddha is the one who is a 'valid cognizer being'.

There are two ways of explaining [the last four factors as proofs of the first factor]: one is by means of the *forward system* which refers to the explanation that is in accordance with the sequence [of those five] presented in [Dignaga's] verse, while the other is by means of the *reverse system* which is the opposite.

The four latter factors are the proofs (Tib.: *sgrub byed*) which establish that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' because they are the correct reasons that prove or establish that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'. Furthermore, there are two ways in which these four serve as proofs or correct reasons. One is by means of the *forward system* and the other by means of the *reverse system*.

The *forward system* here refers to the sequence of the five factors as presented in Dignaga's two lines of homage. The sequence of the five according to the *forward system* is: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) "the teacher", (d) "the sugata", and (e) "the protector".

As to the way in which the four factors establish that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being': first (the second factor) great compassion is established. Thereafter, great compassion serves as the proof or correct reason that establishes (the third factor) "the teacher"; "the teacher" serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) "the sugata"; "the sugata" serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fifth factor) "the protector"; and "the protector" serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established, (the first factor) the 'valid cognizer being'. Hence, there are five syllogisms of the *forward system*:

1. The first syllogism establishes the second factor, great compassion, in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the four factors:
Regarding the subject, effortful (i.e. contrived) affectionate compassion that wishes to liberate all migrators from suffering, if one has familiarized oneself well with that compassion it can become an effortless (i.e. uncontrived) awareness, because it is a mental quality that has a stable basis and does not depend on repeated concerted efforts once it has become familiar.

2. The second syllogism establishes the third factor, “the teacher”, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the second factor):
Regarding the subject, affectionate Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation, they initially meditate by means of two types of exertion (intense and continuous exertion) in order to directly perceive the methods to pacify suffering, because they are mundane beings who wish to conquer the suffering of all sentient beings.
3. The third syllogism establishes the fourth factor, “the sugata”, in dependence on the reason, “the teacher” (the third factor):
Regarding the subject, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, he has “sugata-eliminations” in his continuum, because he is a being who, for the benefit of all sentient beings, has perfected familiarization with the application, the wisdom realizing selflessness.
4. The fourth syllogism establishes the fifth factor, “the protector” in dependence on the reason, “the sugata” (the fourth factor):
Regarding the subject, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, he is the protector of those seeking release, because he has perfected the realization of the paths to liberation, and because he unerringly teaches others the paths he has realized, without any consideration for reward, fame, and so forth.
5. The fifth syllogism establishes the first factor (the main object to be established), the ‘valid cognizer being’, in dependence on the reason, “the protector” (the fifth factor):
Regarding the subject, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, he is a ‘valid cognizer being’ for those seeking release, because he serves as refuge to those seeking release by way of teaching them the paths to liberation, and because he has perfected the ability to protect them.

As mentioned above, of the two ways in which the four factors prove that the Buddha is a ‘valid cognizer being’, the second way is from the point of view of the *reverse system*. The *reverse system* here refers to a sequence of the five factors that is the opposite of the sequence presented in Dignaga’s two lines of homage. This reverse sequence is: (a) “the protector”, (b) “the sugata”, (c) “the teacher”, (d) the one wishing to benefit migrators, and (e) the one who has become a valid cognizer.

As to the way in which the four factors of the *reverse system* establish that the Buddha is a ‘valid cognizer being’: first (the first factor) “the protector” is established. Then “the protector” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the second factor) “the sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the third factor) “the teacher”; “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) great compassion, and great compassion serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established, (the fifth factor) the ‘valid cognizer being’. The five syllogisms of the *reverse system* are:

1. The first syllogism establishes the first factor, “the protector”, in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the four factors:
Regarding the subject, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, he is a protector of those seeking release, because he has attained perfection with regard to unerringly teaching the mode of existence of the four noble truths to those striving for release.
2. The second syllogism establishes the second factor, “the sugata”, in dependence on the reason, “the protector” (the first factor):
Regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he is endowed with “the sugata” that possesses the three qualities of realizations, because he is the protector who, without

depending on another master, teaches all the points and methods of adoption and relinquishment with regard to the four noble truths.

3. The third syllogism establishes the third factor, “the teacher”, in dependence on the reason, “the sugata” (the second factor):
Regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he is preceded by the excellent application which, for the welfare of others, familiarized for a long time with the wisdom realizing selflessness, because he obtained the sugata that possesses the three qualities of realizations.
4. The fourth syllogism establishes the fourth factor, great compassion, in dependence on the reason, “the teacher” (the third factor):
Regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he is preceded by great compassion that wishes to benefit all migrators, because for the welfare of others he perfected prolonged familiarization with the wisdom realizing selflessness.
5. The fifth syllogism establishes the fifth factor (the main object to be established), the ‘valid cognizer being’, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the fourth factor):
Regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he thoroughly accomplished the state of being a ‘valid cognizer being’ which is non-deceptive with regard to those seeking release, because he is the Teacher who perfected his own and others’ benefit.

Please note that the syllogism that establishes “the sugata” by means of the *forward system* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of sugata-eliminations, while the syllogism that establishes “the sugata” by means of the *reverse system* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of sugata-realizations.

The reason for the two [ways of proving that the Buddha is a valid cognizer] is that [some say]:

*Since there exists no proof
That there are valid cognizers which know hidden phenomena*

They argue that becoming familiar with any of the methods for becoming an All-Knowing One who has become a valid cognizer is not a cause that gives rise to an omniscient consciousness which is such [a valid cognizer].

Also, [they argue that] there is no reason for [the existence of] an omniscient consciousness as declared for instance in the statement, “Such omniscient consciousness exists, because we see its results or nature.”

The two lines

*Since there exists no proof,
That there are valid cognizers which know hidden phenomena*

are from Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The meaning of these words will be explained in more detail below.

Even though the two lines are from the *Pramanavarttika*, they do not express Dharmakirti's position; instead, they articulate two types of wrong view held by some non-Buddhists (mainly by followers of the Lokayata and Mimamsaka systems). The first refers to the view that there is no omniscient consciousness because there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness, while the second wrong view is that there is no omniscient consciousness because there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Like Buddhist philosophers, the non-Buddhists who hold the second wrong view accept that a correct reason that establishes a phenomenon (the predicate) must be either of one nature

with the phenomenon or the result of that phenomenon. Therefore, if there were, hypothetically, a correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness, it would be either of one nature with the omniscient consciousness or the result of the omniscient consciousness. However, they hold that such a correct reason does not exist.

The two wrong views are the reason why Dharmakirti presents the two ways to prove that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' (i.e. the *forward system* and the *reverse system*).

The *forward system* is set forth in order to refute the first wrong view while the *reverse system* is set forth in order to refute the second [wrong view].

Establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' by means of the *forward system* refutes the first wrong view that there are no causes which give rise to an omniscient consciousness. Establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' by means of the *reverse system* refutes the wrong view that there is no proof or correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Since the excellent intention – great compassion – is the first proof, it is indicated explicitly. [Great compassion is also] representative of Bodhicitta. Furthermore, excellent application – [the awareness that develops] familiarity with the wisdom realizing selflessness for the sake of others – is the main activity. Since that [activity] is representative of the training in generosity, morality, and so forth [they are] indicated [here], too.

Great compassion is the first proof of the Buddha being a 'valid cognizer being', i.e. great compassion is cited as the first correct reason in dependence on which one establishes that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being', because it is the most important awareness practitioners of the Mahayana have to generate initially. Therefore, the words, "the one wishing to benefit migrators" explicitly indicate great compassion. However, these words also indicate Bodhicitta, great love, the special attitude, and so forth since great compassion is representative of Bodhicitta, etc.

Furthermore, the words, "the teacher" explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness, for it is one of the main awarenesses with which Bodhisattvas familiarize themselves for the benefit of sentient beings. Yet the words also imply the wisdom realizing impermanence, the practice of the perfections of generosity, morality, patience, and so forth, since the wisdom realizing selflessness is representative of these other awarenesses.

The [section on the] first way of explaining [the five factors according to the *forward system*] elucidates the manner in which the teacher arrived [at this goal] through what paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that sets forth the five factors according to the *forward system* describes the different practices in which Bodhisattvas engage to reach the state of a Buddha – the motivation they generate, the various method and wisdom practices, and so forth. Therefore, in dependence on the syllogisms of the *forward system*, one comes to understand the causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows: in dependence on the first syllogism cited above one initially realizes great compassion, the loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Based on such a realization, one is able to infer that those who possess great compassion engage tirelessly in the different Mahayana practices for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Also, having reflected on the suffering of sentient beings, one understands that suffering is the result of afflictions and contaminated karma, which in turn are rooted in the ignorance grasping at the self. One realizes that in order to eliminate others' suffering, Bodhisattvas first need to eradicate suffering and its root in their own continuum, which can only be

accomplished by cultivating the wisdom realizing selflessness. Hence, it is in dependence on great compassion that one realizes “the teacher”, the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that the wisdom that initially realizes selflessness conceptually is eventually able to realize selflessness directly. With this direct realization, Bodhisattvas are gradually able to irrevocably eliminate the different layers of the obstructions to liberation and omniscience. Thus, in dependence on the wisdom that realizes selflessness, one is able to realize sugata-eliminations.

Thereafter, one comes to understand that the one who has attained the cessation of all shortcomings for the benefit of sentient beings is able to protect sentient beings by teaching them the methods for attaining the same state. This means that in dependence on sugata-eliminations one realizes “the protector”.

Eventually in dependence on “the protector” one realizes that the Buddha is a ‘valid cognizer being’, free from any type of fault with regard to perfectly teaching what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded. Therefore, by proceeding through these steps of realization one comes to understand that the Buddha is not a permanent naturally-arisen being, like a creator god, but that he became a ‘valid cognizer being’ by – prior to attaining enlightenment – progressively cultivating and familiarizing himself with the causes for enlightenment, such as great compassion, the wisdom realizing selflessness, and so on. In this way, one refutes the above-mentioned assertion that the omniscient mind of the Buddha does not have any causes.

The [section on the] second way [of presenting the five factors according to the *reverse system*] first delineates the four [noble] truths. Then, having established through [correct] signs that the Buddha has excellent realizations, and from that, that [certain] causes must precede [Buddhahood], [this section] indicates the correct reason [that establishes] how [the Buddha] has arrived [at his goal] in dependence on these paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that explains the five factors according to the *reverse system* first expounds on the four noble truths. Then, by means of citing two correct signs or syllogisms, it establishes that the Buddha possesses excellent realizations: as mentioned before, the first syllogism establishes that the Buddha is “the protector” who unerringly teaches the four noble truths.

The second syllogism proves in dependence on “the protector” that the Buddha possesses the three qualities of sugata-realizations.

The third and fourth syllogisms establish that the Buddha is preceded by particular causes: the third syllogism proves in dependence on sugata-realizations that the Buddha is preceded by “the teacher”, the wisdom realizing selflessness.

The fourth syllogism establishes in dependence on “the teacher” that the Buddha is preceded by great compassion. Therefore, in dependence on these syllogisms one comes to understand that – contrary to the assertion of some non-Buddhists – there are correct reasons that prove the existence of the omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows: by relying on the second section which explains the five factors according to the *reverse system*, one initially realizes what the Buddha chiefly teaches: the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin, the truth of cessation, and the truth of the path. Having thoroughly understood these, one examines the person who first introduced the four truths – the Buddha himself – and comes to realize “the protector”.

One understands that the Buddha taught the four noble truths without depending on other masters but through his own power, because he incontrovertibly realized the nature of these truths. Hence, in dependence on “the protector” one realizes his sugata-realizations.

When examining sugata-realizations one comes to understand that these realizations have not existed naturally since beginningless time but that they were cultivated by meditating on

the wisdom realizing selflessness. Thus, in dependence on sugata-realizations, one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by “the teacher”, i.e. that he was preceded by the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that familiarizing himself with this wisdom while accumulating merit for three countless eons was only possible because – prior to becoming a Buddha, as a Bodhisattva – he was motivated by the affectionate awareness that is unable to bear sentient beings' suffering. Therefore, in dependence on “the teacher” one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by the cultivation of great compassion.

Eventually, in dependence on great compassion, one realizes that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'.

In brief, under this heading, Gyaltsab je explains that Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* reveals the meaning of Dignaga's homage by setting forth the five factors. The five factors are set forth by way of four factors (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata”, and “the protector”) serving as proofs or correct reasons that establish the fifth factor: that the Buddha is the one who has become a valid cognizer, i.e. that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'.

Establishing that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being in dependence on the four factors is divided in two: (1) establishing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' by means of the *forward system* and (2) establishing that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being by means of the *reverse system*.

Establishing that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being by means of the *forward system* removes the wrong view that there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness, while establishing that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being by means of the *reverse system* removes the wrong view that there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Therefore, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* can be divided into two sections: (1) the first proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *forward system* and (2) the second proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *reverse system*.

Questions:

- What five factors appear in the homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*?
- Of the five factors, which one is the object to be proved or established and which one is the proof?
- What are the two systems that prove/establish the 'valid cognizer being'?
- What is the reason for presenting these two systems?
- How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the forward system?
- How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the reverse system?
- Why do the words, “the one wishing to benefit migrators” explicitly indicate great compassion?
- Why do the words, “the teacher” explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness?
- How do the syllogisms of the forward system refute the wrong view that there is no cause of an omniscient consciousness?
- How do the syllogisms of the reverse system refute the wrong view that there is no reason for an omniscient consciousness?

[Dignaga and Dharmakirti's] view

In order to accomplish the goal to which they resolutely aspire, those seeking release establish that the Teacher, the Bhagavan, is a valid cognizer by means of establishing that his teachings are faultless.

In order to be able to attain their goals, those seeking release (i.e. liberation or Buddhahood) need to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'. Realizing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' is necessary in order to rely effectively on the Buddha, engage in continuous practice of his teachings, and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood. The understanding that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' is attained when one realizes that he is without fault. Yet, realizing that the Buddha is without fault must be preceded by realizing that his teachings are faultless.

In general, the Buddha's teachings can be categorized into scriptural teachings and experiential teachings. Scriptural teachings refer to the words of the Buddha that convey his teachings, while experiential teachings refer to the meaning these words express.

Therefore, the way one arrives at the realization that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being is as follows: First one realizes that the experiential teachings of the Buddha are faultless; in dependence on that one realizes that the scriptural teachings of the Buddha are faultless; and in dependence on that one realize that the Buddha himself is without fault – which is equivalent to realizing that he is a 'valid cognizer being'.

[Someone:] It follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer in order to accomplish a person's desired goals, because [goals] are accomplished through direct and inferential valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, valid cognizers can be categorized into: (a) direct valid cognizers (i.e. valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (i.e. valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

Direct valid cognizers are non-conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive. Examples of direct valid cognizers are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table, a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, and an omniscient consciousness.

Inferential valid cognizers are conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive and arise in dependence on a correct reason. Examples of inferential valid cognizers are the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that there is fire on a mountain pass, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that sound is impermanent, and the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness.

Here someone presents the argument that it is pointless to establish that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to accomplish one's goals because such goals can be attained without realizing that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' but by relying on direct or inferential valid cognizers that realize the four noble truths, impermanence, selflessness, and so forth.

[Response:] The Muni is not established to be a valid cognizer for the sake of accomplishing just any goal, but in order to show that the Muni is a valid cognizer with regard to the methods for [attaining] high rebirths and the definite good.

The response to the argument above is that even though it may be possible to accomplish certain goals merely by relying on direct and inferential valid cognizers, the Buddha is not established to be a 'valid cognizer being' in order to accomplish just any goal. Instead, he is established to be a 'valid cognizer being' in order to prove that he is a 'valid cognizer being' with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths and definite good ('definite good' refers to liberation or Buddhahood). The Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths, liberation, and Buddhahood because he is able to perfectly teach the methods for attaining those states.

[Someone:] Even if it is for the sake of those goals, it [still] follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer, because you accept that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are established by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact.

The opponent replies that even if one aspires to attain goals such as high rebirths, liberation or Buddhahood, it is nonetheless pointless to establish that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' because past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc. are only slightly hidden phenomena that can be realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. By means of realizing past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc. one comes to realize the existence of high rebirths, liberation, and Buddhahood. Having realized high rebirths, liberation, and Buddhahood one is then able to engage in the practices that lead one to attain either of these states without having to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'.

[Response:] There is no fault. Without initially relying on the teachings of the Blessed One, one will not even think of selflessness or momentariness of the subtle, not to mention realizing them inferentially. When those possessing discernment initially see that the Blessed One uninterruptedly taught that high rebirths, definitive goodness, and the reasons establishing these are connected to worldly valid cognizers, they will thoroughly investigate whether what is taught [by the Buddha] really exists or not, and they will realize inferentially the mode [of existence of higher rebirths, definite goodness, etc.].

The response here is that there is no fault with regard to asserting that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. However, one can realize these slightly hidden phenomena (in particular the four noble truths) only by relying on the Buddha's teachings. Without listening to and contemplating the teachings of the Buddha one will not even be able to reflect on, for instance, selflessness or *momentariness of the subtle*² not to mention realizing them with an inferential cognizer. This is because the teachings on selflessness are unique to the teachings of the Buddha.

Furthermore, whatever is taught by the Buddha, such as high rebirths, liberation, etc., connects to worldly everyday valid cognition. When those possessing discernment understand this, they will thoroughly investigate the Buddha's teachings and attain inferential realization of the mode of existence of higher rebirths, liberation and so forth.

Here Gyaltsab je agrees that it not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to *realize* hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood – although in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood it is necessary to rely on listening to and contemplating the Buddha's teachings. Furthermore, those possessing discernment are able to comprehend that the Buddha taught repeatedly that hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood connect to worldly everyday things (which are easy to understand), and through thorough analysis they are able to realize these hidden phenomena.

Implied in that response is that even though it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to *realize* or understand liberation or Buddhahood, it is necessary to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to *attain* liberation or Buddhahood. The reason is that unless practitioners of the Buddha Dharma realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being', they will not be able to cultivate the type of firm and unwavering faith in the Buddha required to follow his instructions and practice over countless lifetimes, and even eons, until they attain their goals.

¹Some scholars explain that here the 'momentariness of the subtle' refers to 'impermanence that is characterized by selflessness' (with 'the subtle' referring to selflessness). In order to realize *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness* on the basis of, for instance, a person, one first generates an awareness realizing the person's selflessness, and then an awareness realizing the person's impermanence. The later awareness realizing the person's *impermanence* is the awareness realizing the person's *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness*, for its realization of the person's impermanence is enhanced by the earlier awareness (realizing the person's selflessness). Therefore, even though the earlier awareness lies dormant at the time of the later awareness, it nonetheless affects the later awareness, which is why the later awareness is said to be conjoined with the earlier awareness.

In brief, under this heading, Gyaltsab je explains that those seeking release need to realize that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being in order to be able to engage in effective and continuous practice and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood. However, before being able to realize that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being, i.e. that he is without fault, they need to realize that his teachings are faultless.

Questions:

- Is it necessary to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to realize hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood?
- Why does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood?
- Does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize selflessness or subtle impermanence?
- Why do those seeking release have to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to attain liberation or Buddhahood?
- What are the steps that lead to the realization that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being'?
- What is the opponent's main reason why it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' in order to attain liberation or omniscience?
- What is the meaning of experiential teachings?
- What is the meaning of scriptural teachings?
- Does one have to realize that all the teachings of the Buddha are faultless in order to be able to realize that he is a 'valid cognizer being'?
- By realizing that some of the Buddha's teachings are faultless one is able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to those teachings. But how is one able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to all of his teachings?

The meaning of the branches

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Proving that the Muni is a valid cognizer
- (2) The purpose of praising [the Muni] on account of [being] a valid cognizer.

Proving that the Muni is a valid cognizer

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Showing by means of the forward system the manner in which the teacher arrived [at his goal] through what paths
- (2) Showing by means of the reverse system the reason for the Buddha having arrived [at his goal]

Showing by means of the forward system the manner in which the teacher arrived [at his goal] through what paths

This marks the beginning of the first section which proves that the Buddha is a 'valid cognizer being' by means of the *forward system*. Thus, it also marks the beginning of Gyaltsab je explaining the verses of the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying the instance of 'a valid cognizer being' by way of explaining the meaning of 'the one who has become a valid cognizer'
- (2) Identifying the definition of 'a valid cognizer being' by way of explaining the four remaining [factors]

(3) Identifying the paths that lead to [the state of being a 'valid cognizer being'].

Identifying the instance of 'a valid cognizer being' by way of explaining the meaning of 'the one who has become a valid cognizer'

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The general definition of a valid cognizer
- (2) Showing that the Muni also possesses that definition (i.e. that the Muni is a 'valid cognizer being' or that he possesses valid cognizers)

The general definition of a valid cognizer

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The nature of the definition
- (2) The characteristics

The nature of a valid cognizer

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The definition
- (2) The instances
- (3) Ascertaining that the instances [satisfy] the definition

The definition

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying 'non-deceptive'
- (2) Dispelling [the objection of] non-pervasion (i.e. refuting the objection that the definition of a valid cognizer is too narrow)
- (3) Dispelling [the view of a] broad pervasion (i.e. refuting the objection that the definition is too broad)

Identifying 'non-deceptive'

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

A valid cognizer is a non-deceptive awareness

[Someone:] The realization of objects of comprehension – high rebirths, the definite good, and the methods [that lead to those goals] – depends on valid cognizers. If only the Muni is a valid cognizer with regard to [realizing] those objects in their entirety, what is the definition of a general valid cognizer which is such that by satisfying that definition [an awareness] becomes a valid cognizer?

Here someone asks, if the realization of goals such as high rebirth, liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that lead to these states depend on valid cognizers and if only the Buddha is a valid cognizer being (while non-Buddhist teachers etc. are not), what is the definition of a valid cognizer?

[Response:] Regarding the subject, a direct valid cognizer apprehending blue, it is a **valid cognizer**, because it **is an awareness** that is newly **non-deceptive**.

The definition of a valid cognizer is: an awareness or knower that is newly non-deceptive. As mentioned above, a knower that is newly non-deceptive refers to a consciousness that newly realizes its main object.

Therefore, the subject, an awareness that is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue, it is a valid cognizer, because it is a knower that is newly non-deceptive. It is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue because it newly realizes its main object blue.

[Someone:] If an awareness is a valid cognizer, it follows that it is pointless to present the definition of a valid cognizer in the commentaries, because when a self-knower perceives an awareness it also perceives the non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the awareness.

The argument presented here mentions a type of awareness called "self-knower". Followers of the Sautrantika, Chittamatra, and Yogachara-Svatantrika schools of Buddhism propound the existence of self-knowers, and since the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is presented from the point of view of the Sautrantika Following Reasoning self-knowers are asserted here.

According to Buddhist philosophers who accept self-knowers, there are two types of consciousness: (a) other-knowers and (b) self-knowers. An other-knower is an awareness that is "directed outwards" and perceives phenomena other than a consciousness that is of one nature with itself. Examples are the five sense direct perceivers and conceptual consciousnesses.

A self-knower is a mental consciousness that directly perceives an awareness that is of one nature with itself. Examples of self-knowers are a self-knower that perceives an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, a self-knower that perceives an ear consciousness apprehending a song, a self-knower that perceives an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness, and so forth.

All awarenesses have a self-knower. That self-knower is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the awareness it perceives. The self-knower is simultaneous with the awareness it perceives, for the self-knower and the awareness it perceives arise and go out of existence simultaneously. Also, they are of one substantial entity or of one nature because the self-knower and the awareness it perceives are different aspects of the same consciousness. This means that one part of the awareness (the other-knower) is "directed outwards", for it apprehends phenomena such as shapes, colours, sounds, etc. while the other part (the self-knower) is "directed inwards" and perceives the other-knower.

The self-knower of an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, for instance, is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Unlike the sense consciousness it perceives, it is not a sense consciousness but a mental direct perceiver which perceives *the eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. Therefore, the self-knower of the eye consciousness apprehending the tree is a mental consciousness that is a direct perceiver, for it directly realizes its main object, the *eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. It is not self-awareness or introspection and plays only a small role in spiritual practice.

Likewise, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness has a self-knower that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness. That self-knower is a mental direct perceiver which directly realizes its main object, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness.

The reason for asserting self-knowers is to explain the memory of perception. When our eye consciousness perceives a tree, later on we are able to remember the tree. The memory of the tree is possible owing to our eye consciousness having previously seen the tree. Not only are we able to remember the tree, we are also able to remember that we *saw* the tree. That memory is the result of the self-knower that perceived the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Thus, self-knowers are explained to facilitate the memory of *perceiving* something. The analogy used for a self-knower is a lamp that illuminates itself while it also illuminates other phenomena.

Returning to the argument presented here: it concerns self-knowers that perceive valid cognizers (since every valid cognizer has a self-knower that perceives it). When a self-knower perceiving a valid cognizer realizes its main object – the valid cognizer – it also realizes the non-deceptiveness of the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower, because it realizes the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower. It realizes the non-deceptiveness of the valid cognizer because it realizes the defining characteristics of that valid cognizer. Therefore, the self-knower realizes the definition of the valid cognizer, i.e. it realizes a knower that is newly non-deceptive.

This is why the opponent argues that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature, for everyone already *knows* the definition of a valid cognizer. Everyone knows the definition of a valid cognizer because many of our awarenesses are valid cognizers, and since each of those valid cognizers has its own self-knower, every one of those self-knowers realizes the defining characteristics of the valid cognizer it perceives. Since the self-knower realizes the defining characteristics of the valid cognizer it perceives, it also realizes the definition of the valid cognizer it perceives (i.e. it realizes a knower that is newly non-deceptive). Thus, many of our self-knowers have realized the definition of a valid cognizer which is why we already know the definition of a valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[If] being able to perform a function abides:
Non-deceptive....

[Response:] Regarding the subject, objects of knowledge, it does not follow that [a self-knower] fully realizes [that the valid cognizer the self-knower perceives] is non-deceptive merely by experiencing the nature [of that valid cognizer], because if **being able to perform the functions** of [for instance] cooking, scorching, etc. **abides** the way it is comprehended [by a valid cognizer apprehending a fire, that valid cognizer] is **non-deceptive** with regard to these functions. However, there is no certainty [that the self-knower perceiving the valid cognizer apprehending the fire realizes that the valid cognizer apprehending the fire is non-deceptive] merely by experiencing the nature [of that valid cognizer].

The response to the argument above is that when a self-knower realizes the general nature of a valid cognizer, it does not necessarily realize that valid cognizer completely with its defining characteristics, to the extent that one is able to identify it as valid cognizer and thus as being non-deceptive.

For example, followers of the non-Buddhist Lokayata system only assert the existence of *direct* valid cognizers; they do not assert the existence of *inferential* valid cognizers, although inferential valid cognizers arise in their mental continuum.

When an inferential valid cognizer realizing the presence of fire on a mountain pass arises in the continuum of a follower of the Lokayata, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the fire, i.e. it realizes the fire. Owing to the person's familiarity with fire the inferential valid cognizer also realizes the fire's functions of, for instance, cooking, scorching, etc. Therefore, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to these functions.

Furthermore, the self-knower that perceives the inferential valid cognizer realizes the general nature of that valid cognizer, for it realizes the *awareness* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

However, since a follower of the Lokayata system takes the position that there are no inferential valid cognizers, the self-knower of his inferential valid cognizer does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass. As the self-knower does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass it does not realize the defining characteristics (the definition) of that

inferential valid cognizer. This means that it does not realize the determinative knower which in dependence on its basis, a correct sign, is newly *non-deceptive* with regard to its object of comprehension, a hidden phenomenon (i.e. the presence of fire on the mountain pass).

Therefore, the self-knower of that inferential valid cognizer experiences or realizes the general nature of that inferential valid cognizer but it does not realize that the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

This example illustrates that it is for the sake of those who, on account of holding wrong views etc., are unable to identify a valid cognizer that the definition of a valid cognizer is provided in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature.

In brief, under this outline Gyalsab je introduces the definition of a valid cognizer, in particular the aspect of the definition of being 'non-deceptive' ("*A valid cognizer is a non-deceptive awareness*").

An awareness is non-deceptive when it realizes the defining functions a particular object is able to perform. For instance, fire is able to perform the functions of cooking, scorching, etc. Hence, an inferential valid cognizer that realizes fire on a mountain pass is non-deceptive with regard to these main functions of fire. ("*If being able to perform a function abides: / Non-deceptive ...*").

But even though in general, an awareness that is non-deceptive with regard to fire is also non-deceptive with regard to the defining characteristics or functions of fire, and a self-knower that is non-deceptive with regard to a valid cognizer is also non-deceptive with regard to the defining characteristics of a valid cognizer (i.e. realizes that the valid cognizer is non-deceptive) this does not mean it is pointless to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* literature.

Questions:

- What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
- What is an example of a valid cognizer?
- What is the meaning of being non-deceptive?
- What is the meaning of being newly non-deceptive?
- What is a self-knower?
- What does a self-knower realize?
- Why is a self-knower simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the awareness it perceives?
- What is an other-knower?
- Why does someone argue that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
- What is the response to the argument that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
- What type of valid cognizer do the followers of the Lokayata system assert and what type of valid cognizer do they not assert?